

Ward's Hog Wins S.E. Pa. 4-H Market Hog Derby

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NORTH CORNWALL (Lebanon Co.) — The overall grand champion of the 1994 4-H Southeastern Pennsylvania Hog Derby was also the champion for rate of gain, and the reserve heavyweight champion on foot.

Shown by Jessica Ward, daughter of Dan and Karen Ward, of Elizabethtown, her 254-pound homebred hog was out of a bred gilt she bought at the 1993 state Farm Show from Arnold Hog Farm, in Lebanon. She had purchased the bred gilt to start a 4-H breeding project.

Ward's champion first weighed in at 40 pounds, and averaged a rate of gain of 2.229 pounds per day. The carcass weighed 195 pounds and was 33.8 inches long.

The loin eye area (LEA), which is the large meat portion in a pork chop, was 6.65 inches and it had a back fat of .65 inches and was 54.381 percent lean. According to calculations, it was gaining .968 pounds of lean, per day on test.

The recently held, and unusual hog derby concluded on Saturday evening with the judging of carcasses. Held at Stoltzfus's Meats in Intercourse, Dr. Bill Henning, Penn State meats specialist, was carcass judge. He also explained many of the characteristics that the industry seeks in meats and how it

relates to production.

Further, veterinarians were on hand and displayed real examples of health problems, the effects on the quality and value of products or byproducts, and methods for preventing such problems.

The derby was conceived several years ago by a group of extension agents working with 4-H groups in southeastern part of the state, the area that produces the majority of the state's hogs.

The agents wanted to modernize the 4-H program by providing an additional alternative to the historic on-foot-only competition, which touches only partially on providing an understanding of the goals of commercial hog production.

The result was the hog derby, based on competitions held by adult producers. The derby has created an educational hog-raising program for youth that emphasizes real-world production values, such as rate of gain, overall conformation and consumer product demands.

The youth weigh-in their market hogs early in the summer, take them back home and raise them, keeping health records, feeding records, etc.

The hogs are then brought back to a central place, reweighed and shown on foot; taken for slaughter and evaluated again. Further, the

animals are also scanned with ultrasound for the loin eye area and the depth of backfat and those results are posted along with the actual findings to see how closely the measurement of the live animal compares to the measurements taken from the carcass.

The entire derby consists of three areas of competition — rate of gain, the on-foot evaluation, and the carcass evaluation. The combined total score determines the overall grand champion and is based on a final index that has been developed by pork producers nationally.

The ideal of such a competition as the derby is that the champion on foot would be the champion carcass, and, even more ideally, it would also lead in rate of gain.

Apparently that ideal is being neared.

The level of competition and the results of the 4-H breeding/hog raising projects after several years of involvement demonstrate that the derby program is working.

It is providing youth with a basis for a solid understanding of modern hog-raising techniques and objectives. And, with the results of the competitions falling close to the ideal, the veracity of the hog-raising information being taught by Penn State extensionists and 4-H leaders is demonstrated.

In fact, seven of the eight champions finished within the top 10 overall.

The only discrepancy between on-foot judging and final index results was with the champion heavyweight and reserve grand champion on foot being placed 23rd overall, after final calculations. That animal was shown by Lisa Pfautz, daughter of Rick and Sue Pfautz, of Lititz.

The reserve champion overall was shown by Jared Forry, son of Gary and J. Lynne Forry, of Manheim, whose 278-pound entry also was reserve champion for rate of gain and averaged .932 pounds of lean gain per day. It's back fat was .9 inch, had an LEA of 6.96 inches, a carcass length of 34.1 inches, and carcass weight of 220 pounds. It had a rate of gain of 2.21 pounds per day.

Jared Seitz showed the third place animal which also was the reserve champion mediumweight on foot. His market hog started at 44 pounds and finished at 230 pounds. Seitz' hog averaged 1.917 pounds per day and with only .6

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Jessica Ward holds her plaque for showing the grand champion overall of the S.E. Pennsylvania 4-H Market Hog Derby, while Dr. Bill Henning, PSU meats specialist, holds her plaque for also having the champion rate of gain.



Jared Forry shows his reserve overall grand champion of the S.E. Pa. 4-H Market Hog Derby, while Dr. Bill Henning, PSU meats specialist holds the plaque the hog won for reserve champion rate of gain. The hog didn't place among the champions in the on-foot competitions.



Jessica Ward stands behind her reserve champion heavyweight on-foot market hog.



Brandon Forry shows brother Adam's champion market hog on foot of the show portion of the S.E. Pa. 4-H Market Hog Derby. The hog ranked fifth place overall.



Dr. Bill Henning, PSU meats specialist, discusses various aspects of carcass quality during the educational workshop portion of the S.E. Pa. 4-H Market Hog Derby.